DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 322 927 IR 053 274

TITLE	The Information Ambassadors: The 1988-89 Library/Book Fellows.
INSTITUTION	American Library Association, Chicago, Ill.
SPONS AGENCY	United States Information Agency, Washington, D. C.
PUB DATE	89
NOTE	25p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Cultural Exchange; *Grants; Law Libraries; Librarians; Library Associations; *Library Automation; Library Collection Development; *Library Education; *Library Planning; Online Searching; Overseas Employment; Professional Recognition

ABSTRACT

The Library/Book Fellows program began in 1986 with a grant from the U.S. Information Agency. The purposes of the program are to: (1) increase international understanding through the establishment of professional and personal relationships and the accomplishment of mutual goals, and (2) to enable U.S. librarians and publishers to enrich and broaden their career experience through a short period of overseas service. The 1988-89 inaugural class of nine Fellows was chosen from more than 300 applicants. Their programs involved teaching postgraduate library students, setting up a system for automating libraries, planning a law library, training host country librarians in traditional and automated information retrieval techniques, assisting with updating and establishing library policies and procedures, compiling a bibliography of 2,000 books translated into Arabic, conducting a systems analysis and teaching specialized computer courses, improving information dissemination at public libraries, and helping children develop a love of reading. This booklet presents recollections of the Fellows' experiences in Uganda, France, Thailand, Liberia, Egypt, Sweden, Argentina, Malawi, and North Yemen, together with profiles of each of the Fellows, and an overview of each program. (SD)

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THE INFORMATION AMBASSADORS:

THE 1988-89 LIBRARY/BOOK FELLOWS

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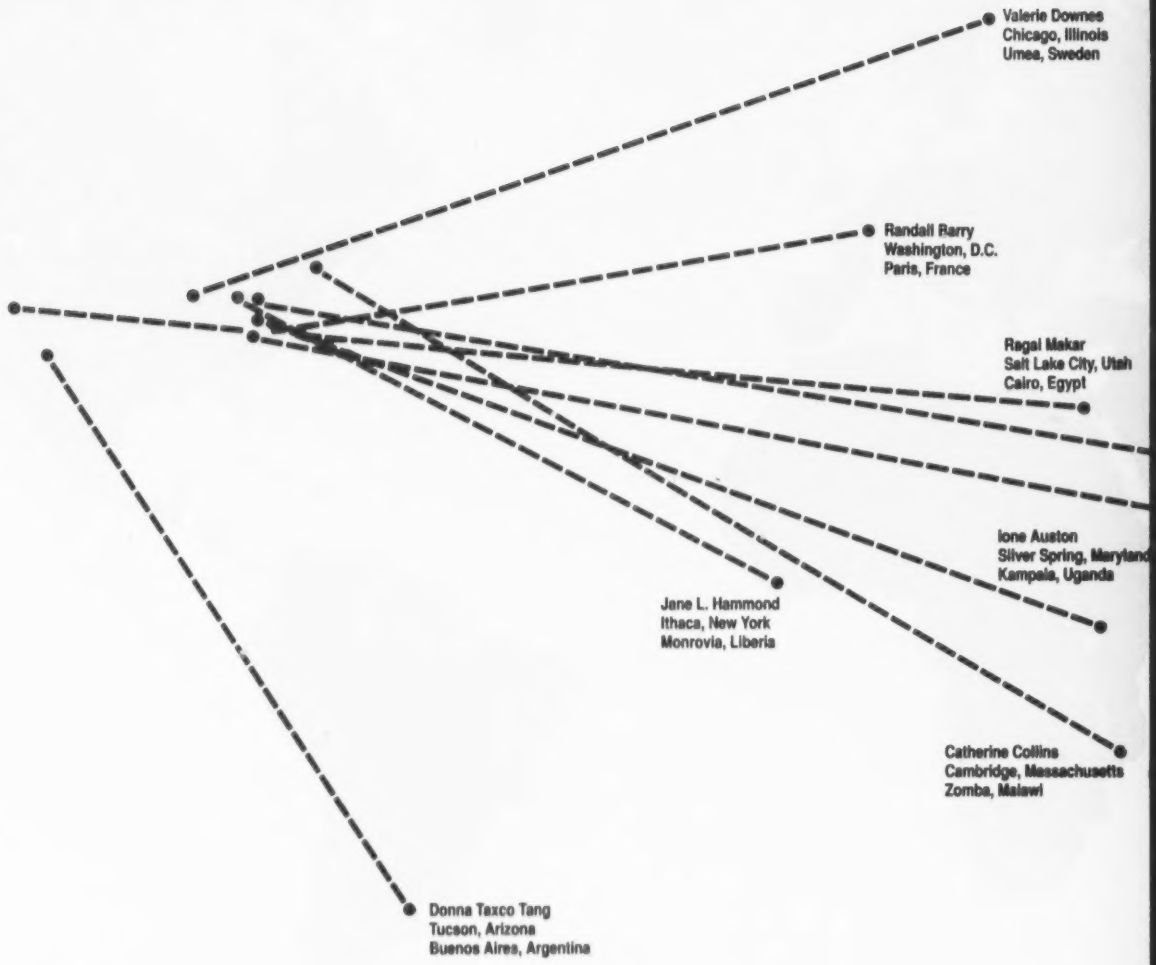


"I wish to assure you that the contributions of Ms. Ione Auston were of great value to us. Not only did she increase consciousness in computer-based information work, but she also increased goodwill between Ugandan and American academics, librarians and persons in general." Dr. Syed Ameer Haider Abidi, Director, Makerere University, East African School of Librarianship, Kampala, Uganda.

"During the period of her stay in Sanaa University, Nancy Hill has offered us innumerable valuable suggestions and recommendations to eliminate the problems of the libraries of Sanaa University...I shall be ever grateful for her efforts which she utilized for the betterment of our libraries. I wish her all the best in her future career." M.A. Abdulmoghini Al-Sanabani, Director General of Sanaa University Libraries, Yemen Arab Republic.

"The visit (of Valerie Downes) was extremely valuable to us. We broadened our views, got new ideas and impulses, increased our knowledge about school librarianship, and had a most agreeable time together with Valerie. Thank you very much." Elsi Ekstedt, Head Librarian, County Library of Vasterbotten, Sweden.

"We believe that the principal objectives in support of this library were achieved extremely well, beyond our expectations. In addition, we would like to emphasize that beyond her abilities and professionalism, Mrs. Tang's human qualities were demonstrated by her constant positive, open, agreeable and cordial attitude." Ana Dobra de Lesta, Nelida Alberti, and Raul Juan Jose Alvarez, Popular Library "Julio A. Roca," General Roca, Rio Negro, Argentina.

"In a world divided by ideology, by trade barriers, by military threats and nuclear fears, we librarians are not powerless. We are the ambassadors of an indivisible world—of culture and books and ideas. Unfortunately, we are not plenipotentiary. But there is no country in the world where librarians cannot make some small progress toward removing the boundaries and lowering the barriers which separate cultures and which are sponsored by citizens or by governments. Every librarian, regardless of his government's policy, has the opportunity, if he has the courage, to open the avenues of books and ideas a little wider. . . . We must try to make the world of books more open—so that men and women everywhere may breathe freely the uncensored open air of ideas." Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Indivisible World: Libraries and the Myth of Cultural Exchange*. (Washington, D.C.: The Library of Congress, 1985)

Nancy Hill
Roanoke, Virginia
Sanaa, Yemen Arab Republic

Ruth A. Pagell
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Bangkok, Thailand

PURPOSE

The Library/Book Fellows Program began in 1986 with a grant to the American Library Association from the United States Information Agency (USIA). The program's purpose is twofold: (1) to increase international understanding through the establishment of professional and personal relationships and the accomplishment of mutual goals, and (2) to enable U.S. librarians and publishers to enrich and broaden their career experience through a short period of overseas service.

Fellows are given the opportunity to share their expertise with librarians and publishers from other countries and to learn from their overseas colleagues' experiences. When the Fellows return home, they bring increased awareness and understanding, and they share that understanding with their U.S. colleagues.

THE PARTICIPANTS

The second (1988-89) class of nine Fellows was chosen from more than 300 applicants in a demanding process seeking U.S. library and publishing professionals to initiate and carry out projects in other nations. Their assignments lasted from four to fifteen months in such diverse posts as Uganda, France, Thailand, Liberia, Egypt, Sweden, Argentina, Malawi, and North Yemen. The Fellows' projects, developed in cooperation with host country institutions and USIA, were wide-ranging and included setting up a system for automating library functions, establishing a law library, training host-country librarians in traditional and automated information retrieval techniques, and helping children develop a lifelong love of reading.

Each Fellow's experience was unique and posed exciting and unusual challenges as well as unforeseen obstacles. But all of the Fellows gained new perspectives in the process of sharing materials, ideas, and information with their overseas colleagues.

The following profiles highlight the experiences of these Fellows.

IONE AUSTON

from
Silver Spring,
Maryland, to
Kampala, Uganda

Information
Specialist
Vector Control
Information Center
Arlington,
Virginia

Post:
the East African
School of
Librarianship at
Makerere
University in
Kampala, Uganda

In recent decades, Uganda has gone through several cycles of progress and decline. When Ione Auston accepted a teaching Fellowship at Makerere University in the capital of Kampala, the nation was struggling to rebuild its economy. This effort focused in part on revitalizing Uganda's major institutions, including Makerere University, regarded as one of Africa's most important seats of learning until the oppressive rule of Idi Amin and successive efforts caused the university and other prominent facilities to languish during the 1970's and early 1980's.

In the mid-80's, the nation's new leader, President Museveni, was actively promoting and funding redevelopment programs throughout Uganda. With the rehabilitation of Makerere University's physical structures already under way and given the President's strong encouragement of information access and support for the people's right to know, the time was ripe for someone to help expose Ugandan society to a fuller wealth of information services. Enter Library Fellow Ione Auston.

Auston's nine-month assignment (September 1, 1988, to May 31, 1989) involved teaching postgraduates who had work experience in libraries and second-year diploma students (equivalent to U.S. college juniors) at the East African School of Librarianship (EASL) at Makerere University. The EASL, Auston learned was founded in 1963 with assistance from UNESCO and by agreement of three East African governments. It is the only library school of its kind in the region, attracting students from nearly a dozen African republics and reaching as far south as the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean.

The school offers a three-tiered track of study: (1) a one-year postgraduate diploma in librarianship, (2) a two-year diploma in professional librarianship for non-graduates, and (3) a six-month library assistants' certificate. (At present, a three-year baccalaureate program is being instituted to replace the two-year diploma course.) Without a Library Fellow, the School of Librarianship would not have been able to offer the postgraduate program this past year due to a severe shortage of faculty.

Upon her arrival in Kampala, Auston set to work planning courses that would address the immediate needs of library students and would help build a solid foundation of learning for these library professionals' long-term efforts to improve the nation's information delivery system. Appropriately, the coursework covered such subjects as new media, the theory and practice of bibliographic control (i.e., abstracting, indexing, archives and records management), cataloging, and microcomputer applications. The latter subject—microcomputers—was to have the greatest impact on students and on EASL even before this Fellow's leavetaking.

Classes began on October 10, with a meager group of three postgraduate students in attendance, ranging in age (from mid-30's to 50) and experience (from one year of fiction cataloging to ten years of operating a photocopying machine). Auston found this class size to be "ideal" because a scarcity of teaching materials and equipment made it necessary for the students to share books and handouts.

Similar conditions prevailed for this Fellow's class of 24 Diploma II students, composed mainly of recent high school graduates, who were forced to share two copies of a major text among themselves. (Adding to this hardship, one textbook "disappeared" during the final week of the term.)

Auston, left, with Ugandan colleague.

Although all of Auston's students were "eager learners," the class pace fell back to nearly a crawl when problems unique to Uganda arose: the aforementioned materials shortage; monthly bouts of malaria-induced fever—not uncommon in this equatorial region—that periodically laid up one of the postgraduate students; transportation difficulties ("Kampala has no real developed community services—no regular bus schedule, no fuel for the university bus, only one local taxi station in the middle of town, and no telephone service," Auston pointed out); and a university-wide strike that closed down classes and buildings, including the library, for two weeks during the third term.

Auston made headway with her students despite these and other roadblocks. In conjunction with the archives and records management segment of the coursework, for instance, she took her Diploma II class on a tour of the Government Printing Offices (GPO) and the National Archives in Entebbe. A thunderstorm knocked out the electricity at the GPO and left the printing equipment silent. But staff made the four-hour visit a productive one nonetheless with their instructive commentary and informative responses to questions.

At the National Archives, students came to have a greater appreciation of Uganda's history and development as

reflected in its store of documents. Remarked Auston, "The field trip . . . created a new awareness among the students of their role as collectors, preservers, purveyors, and disseminators of Uganda's history." This was an important discovery indeed, for in more recent years little had been done to maintain, preserve, and organize the documents. This gap in the preservation of Uganda's heritage would need to be filled through the efforts of these future librarians/information specialists.

Perhaps the most promising avenue of study, one not coincidentally tied to these same issues of cultural preservation and advancement, was the training in microcomputers Auston gave her students. (She also held special skills-based workshops and tutorials in microcomputers for staff from the university library and for two librarians from separate government ministries.)

The East African School of Librarianship had been teaching information storage and retrieval as well as library automation since 1969, Auston learned. A shortage of computer equipment, however, caused this instruction to be carried out without benefit of actual hands-on practice.

Fortunately, Auston brought her laptop PC to Uganda and made it available to students, faculty, and staff. Students progressed through a variety of training exercises in computer applications and information retrieval. Every spare moment was used—even semester breaks—to bring students "up to speed" on the computer.

Auston knew that this training would be pointless in the long run unless EASL students had regular and permanent access to microcomputers. Therefore, she drew up a comprehensive automation proposal that would help the library school round out its theory-based computer coursework with practical training.

Her proposal listed several aims: the development of a microcomputer teaching laboratory for training in microcomputer-based cataloging, word processing, integrated database design, library statistics generation, budgeting, etc.; the establishment of a desktop publishing unit not only for instructional use in printing and bookmaking but also for practical use in completing special library projects (e.g., preparing and maintaining directories and bibliographies, and publishing bulletins, conference proceedings, and abstracts of Makerere University dissertations and theses); and the efficient conduct of various time-consuming administrative tasks, such as generating correspondence, registering students, preparing budgets, developing course outlines and syllabi (all administrative, academic, and professional typing was, at the time, done on EASL's barely functional sole typewriter).

Just before her departure, Auston learned that UNESCO had accepted her proposal for the purchase of both microcomputer and photocopying equipment. Funding was to begin the following fiscal year (fall 1990), which coincided perfectly with plans to renovate the EASL building in the Fall of 1989, "thus ensuring a secure environment for a microcomputer laboratory," she said. (Break-ins and thefts had been regular occurrences throughout the university previously. This Fellow even had an encounter herself with an intruder one Saturday as she toiled alone in the locked library school facility; drawn to the building's unfinished basement by unusual noises, Auston came face to face with a nanny goat and two kids!)

So that the computer skills she fostered in students and staff, and the publishing projects already under way could continue, Auston allowed the School of Librarianship to purchase her handy laptop computer. In addition, Makerere University supplied the school with 100 diskettes, computer paper, six inkjet cartridges, an external 5.25-inch drive, and a host of other necessary materials to get the new Microcomputer Center off and running.

Summing up the library scene in Uganda, Auston wrote:

In a country the size of Oregon with a 50 percent literacy rate, over 28 tribal languages, an impoverished economy, frequent power outages, few paved roads, . . . little publishing other than newspapers, and a "street value" for every item, including books and magazines, just how important are libraries? Certainly, they are luxuries for the immediate future. Only a small percentage of the Ugandan population can be characterized at present as avid readers with . . . a strong sense of cultural preservation and respect for the printed word. Yet at the same time, information has become an essential ingredient for conducting everyday life.

. . .

Accountability is slowly being introduced by the government, and various ministries, banks, and businesses are acquiring microcomputers as a means to this end. I think my students are in a position to contribute to the effective operations of these offices and to the recovery of Uganda's economy. It is certain that the very best efforts of everyone are required; it is hoped that the skills and energies of the EASL graduates will be maximized to the immediate benefit of Uganda as well as to themselves.

Clearly, this Library Fellow made some inroads to reinvigorating one of the region's most important institutions of learning. In the process, she may even have opened up a few information channels that will help Uganda progress more swiftly on the path to social, economic, and political recovery and development.

"One *could* say that there is a ***lifetime*** of 'opportunity' here, and I am **HAPPY** to have [had] a small part in it."

RANDALL BARRY

from Washington, D.C.. to Paris, France

MARC Standards Specialist Library of Congress

Post: The American Library in Paris

In 1987, the American Library in Paris (ALP) decided to automate its operations. This decision was made in cooperation with the library of the American University of Paris (AUP), whose premises adjoin ALP's and with which ALP has an agreement to share collections. The project's main thrust was the retrospective conversion (recon) of the manual catalogs housed in these institutions. On September 6, 1988, with a leave of absence from The Library of Congress, ALA Library Fellow Randall Barry arrived in Paris to lend a hand.

The American Library in Paris is the largest English-language library in continental Europe and the only public library in Paris specializing in materials in English and supporting American Studies. It boasts a membership of 2,000 (42 percent French, 38 percent American, and 20 percent other nationalities) and a collection of more than 80,000 volumes and 350 periodical subscriptions. A private, nonprofit institution, ALP was founded in 1920 through a grant from the American Library Association in order to serve the information needs of Americans living abroad. Its mission has since expanded to that of providing services to all English-speaking people in and around Paris. The library also has branches in five French cities: Nancy, Nantes, Grenoble, Montpelier, and Toulouse.

Work on the recon project had begun a few months before Barry's arrival. The library's director, Robert Grattan, had considerable experience with online library systems. He had overseen the installation of the Virginia Tech Library System (VTLS), chosen for its versatility and because VTLS is one of the few American vendors that

has well-supported USMARC-based installations in Europe. (The USMARC format was selected for the catalog records because most of ALP's and AUP's materials are published in the United States.)

The system in place, someone was needed to adapt it to the library's needs and to coordinate automation with the American University of Paris. Randall Barry seemed tailor-made to oversee this project. Not only did he have expertise in cataloging and MARC standards; he also had the requisite recon experience. He successfully put this experience to work during his 12-month assignment and helped bring to completion the retrospective conversion of ALP's manual catalog.

His first task was to assist in building the database of MARC records for the children's collection (totaling 6,000 volumes), the collection with the highest circulation. The completion of this task would help speed along the percentage of ALP's total materials placed in the database and allow the circulation system to be put into production in a timely manner.

Meanwhile, he helped ALP staff conduct a complete inventory of the library's collection as part of the retrospective conversion. This phase of the project involved attaching bar code labels to most items, weeding the collection, and developing a new system of cuttering—all of which would ultimately enhance the library's operations and improve its efficiency. The inventory and bar-coding took eight months to complete, with staff averaging a prodigious 2,000 titles per week.

In tandem with these tasks, Barry spent time analyzing work patterns at the library and drawing up procedures to facilitate ALP's transition to the integrated VTLS library system. He also planned and wrote a detailed reference, cataloging, and circulations manual in English and French for library staff and patron use.

Additionally, Barry held four seminars to train ALP and AUP library staff in how to use the new VTLS system. These seminars covered reference service, cataloging, and circulations using the USMARC format. Said Barry, "The ALP/AUP joint database is one of the first in Europe to include holdings records that follow the USMARC format." Immediately before the start-up of the circulation system, he also gave special hands-on computer training to the circulation staff.

All of these activities took place as the library attempted to provide "service as usual" to its patrons, commented Barry. Thus, staff continued to perform their regular duties while they worked on the recon project. This situation naturally produced delays. Also hampering progress was a series of labor strikes, which are typical for France. A five-week postal strike beginning in October caused a back-up of mail delivery, which included delays for tapes of MARC records, vital to the recon project. A subsequent four-week transportation strike caused still more delays.

Yet the retrospective conversion of over 70,000 manual records was completed by summer and the circulation system went online on September 8, 1989—only a few months behind schedule. Along with the system's start-up came several other positive changes: the opportunity for

ALP and AUP to have an authority file for the first time, the creation of an up-to-date machine-readable patron file, and the likelihood of developing a shared database of American collections with other facilities throughout Paris.

Full automation of the ALP/AUP collections has already sparked interest in France and it is hoped, eventually, throughout other parts of Europe. By maintaining an important USMARC-based library system and database, ALP and AUP may lead other French and European libraries to opt for a widely-used system such as VTLS and the USMARC format to build their own databases. This promotes standardization in the world and helps thwart the development of divergent approaches to meeting the same library-related challenges.

The American Library (entrance at bottom right of photo) is but a stone's throw from the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

The recon project brought Barry many rare opportunities to meet with other overseas colleagues as well. During the first week of August 1989, he represented the Library of Congress in Moscow in a continuation of a project begun the previous year when a Soviet delegation met with U.S. librarians at the "U.S.-U.S.S.R. Seminar on Access to Library Resources Through Technology and Preservation" in Washington, D.C. The Moscow trip was funded by the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX). Its goal was to find a way for the Soviet Union's All-Union Book Chamber and the Library of Congress to exchange bibliographic records in machine-readable format. While in Moscow, Barry visited the Lenin State Library, which will be using the VTLS system, and shared with Soviet librarians his experiences in working with the VTLS system in France.

In Paris, he also participated in several WORLDNET Teleconferences sponsored by USIS in coordination with the Ben Franklin Documentation Center and attended the 55th conference of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). In mid-February of 1989, Barry attended an exposition of language-related publishers and industries in Paris. Early in May of 1989, he was invited to give a seminar on the MARC format to library staff at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris. This gave him yet another opportunity to "preach the gospel" of the importance of conforming to MARC standards. Throughout his year in Paris, Barry was asked to make presentations to various interested groups describing his activities at his host institution.

His major and most rewarding activity, however, was the retrospective conversion of the manual catalogs of the American Library in Paris and the library of the American University of Paris. Barry estimates that more than 6,000 staff hours went into the ALP/AUP recon project this past year. Barry sums up his success perhaps best in a quote taken from his last report home:

A retrospective conversion project of this type was truly unique. Producing an American-style database of USMARC bibliographic, authority, and holdings records, using an American library system like VTLS, in a non-U.S. environment such as Fra... presented some interesting challenges. . . . The "new" American Library in Paris will not only serve its public better, but it will act as a model to French libraries. Judging from the reactions of librarians that came to visit over the last few months, I think that professionals here are already looking to ALP for guidance and advice.

"**EVERYONE** here has been friendly and supportive from the very start of my stay in **France**. . . . I really got to feel that I was a ***PART*** of the library family here."

CATHERINE COLLINS

from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Zomba, Malawi

Project Librarian

Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library

Harvard University

Post: The University of Malawi in Zomba, Malawi

ALA Library Fellow Catherine Collins arrived in the Republic of Malawi on October 1, 1988. Located in east central Africa, just north of Mozambique, this small land-locked nation has a population about the size of New York City's (8 million) and is predominantly rural (96 percent of the inhabitants work the land). Yet Collins felt immediately at home, in this college town inhabited by people with a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds.

Collins was assigned to the University of Malawi's main campus, Chancellor College, located in Zomba, the original colonial capital and one of Malawi's three largest towns. The university is Zomba's major employer, but recent financial constraints are causing Chancellor College to "slowly lose its carefully built up Malawian staff . . . and . . . to rely on ex-patriate staff again," according to Collins. The university library staff impressed Collins with their high degree of professionalism and awareness of library developments in the United States and Great Britain.

Collins' work took her to libraries at each of the four campuses that make up the University of Malawi library system—the Polytechnic College in Blantyre; Bunda College of Agriculture and Kamuzu College of Nursing in Lilongwe, Malawi's capital; and Chancellor College, the largest campus, in Zomba. The university's combined holdings total 316,000 volumes and 3,000 periodical subscriptions. Each campus library has its own public services division; all other services are provided by a Central Services Unit located at Chancellor College. Collins found staff at each library to be well organized and running the libraries with efficiency. The only weakness, she said, is that "they haven't quite completely grasped the philosophy of dissemination of material and information."

To help the university library system improve information access and delivery, Collins began her fellowship with three objectives: (1) to assist the University of Malawi's centralized cataloging department, (2) to provide on-the-job training to library assistants, and (3) to teach cataloging and classification classes in the library certification program (this last project was dropped because the certification program was never funded).

She spent her first months in-country fulfilling the first objective. This task consisted mainly of cataloging the Malawiana collection, an important collection of materials about or published in Malawi. This special collection had been neglected in recent years due to staff shortages, so a heavy backlog of uncataloged materials existed. Furthermore, each branch library maintained a separate collection of Malawiana, with very little overlap of the holdings. Thus, Collins had to work on site at each of the library's branch locations. But the most challenging task she confronted during this phase of her project was the need to do original cataloging for most of the collection.

By the time she left Malawi in November 1989, Collins had cataloged several thousand items. She eliminated the backlog at the branch campuses and made headway into cataloging the approximately 8,000 Malawi materials at Chancellor College, leaving 5,500 items to be cataloged by the permanent staff.

A natural outgrowth of the cataloging assignment was to attempt to create a Name Authority File using material Collins came across in her cataloging of Malawiana. The file was to be an alphabetical list of personal and corporate names stored on the computer in WordPerfect. Plans were to convert the file later to MARC format and install it in a CDS/ISIS Name Authority File database. Work on the file never reached completion because of the complexity of setting up CDS/ISIS databases, the lack of computer skills among the library staff, and the lack of equipment.

The Name Authority File project was not fruitless, however, for it re-emphasized the library's need to automate. Collins thus "switched gears" and redefined her overseas assignment in response to the university's more pressing needs. She found herself in the "exhilarating" position of having to become "some sort of library computer applications expert." She set to work learning all she could about CD-ROMs, database creation, cataloging subsystems, and word processing. In December, she attended a university-sponsored seminar on computing and was "amazed" that most of the presenters still viewed computers mainly as statistical and mathematical tools.

Since Malawi is considering

Left to right J. Chalera, M. Chiwago and V. Somba of the Chancellor College Malawiana Collection.

Left to right G. Nyali with Collins.

installing a national database, which the University of Malawi is to play a large role in creating, Collins found it all the more urgent to help advance knowledge and promote skills in library automation. (She was even granted a three-month extension of her planned one-year stay in order to achieve several goals related to this new aspect of her project.) To this end, she helped put together several proposals for training librarians in computer applications and related activities. These early requests for funding were turned down by USAID/HRID, but they laid the groundwork for a larger-scale proposal.

The aim of this "grand" proposal is ultimately to improve access to information in the sciences and technology throughout Malawi. If funding is received, the project will begin with the automation of the University of Malawi library system, focusing on retrospective conversion, over a period of five and one-half years. More specifically, the Library will "create a local database of scientific and technological information, provide reference services using the latest CD-ROM technology, provide improved document delivery through [a] link with the Indiana University library system, provide improved information management through various levels of staff training, and provide improved record-sharing with international databases." Once these goals are met, the university library system will be in a position to promote resource-sharing throughout both Malawi and southern Africa, and automated linkages will be formed outside the country with large databases in North America and the United Kingdom.

Computerization throughout the University of Malawi is a seriously pursued aim, said Collins, because of the university's mission to assist national development. As the country's leading institution of higher learning and research, with a growing emphasis on practical programs, the university is perfectly positioned to pioneer the new information technology and bring immediate benefits to researchers involved in national development programs.

To help prepare for the eventual computerization of library services, Collins assisted in developing a computer literacy course for all library staff. She also offered a CDS/ISIS training workshop to two staff members who already had substantial computer experience. The training sessions were very successful and excited the Malawi University librarians about their role in "the library world of the future."

Collins offered other training workshops, both formally and informally, to her colleagues in Malawi. These included an ISIS training presentation to the computer programmer at the Geological Survey and a cataloging and classification course through the Malawi Library Association's (MALA) Certificate Program. The latter course replaced the one she was to have taught as part of the university's prospective library-science degree program. The MALA course is for many library assistants the only formal library training they will ever receive and the only training in library science available in Malawi.

Collins' 15-month assignment also gave her the opportunity to see her own practice of librarianship with a fresh eye. The cross-cultural sharing of information she experienced brought unique rewards beyond the merely practical. As she wrote in her final report:

The time in Malawi was absolutely wonderful. Working in those circumstances made me again excited to be a librarian. The interactions with Malawian colleagues and the responsibilities of the job were tremendous, and combined to make one of the highlights of my career. It was fascinating to see the great similarities in library operations and library problems between the University of Malawi libraries and academic libraries in the United States. We can and do share . . . many of the same experiences, outlooks, problems, and potential solutions.

That says a lot about the common, human thread, which no number of technological linkages can replace, that binds together the world library community. Fostering those ties is what fellowship—the ALA one in particular—is all about. Just ask Catherine Collins.

"This has been an incredible **WORK** and **LEARNING** experience—challenging, frustrating, **exciting,** demanding, but, above all, ***enjoyable.***"

VALERIE DOWNES

from

Chicago, Illinois,

to Umea, Sweden

Head Librarian

Morton West High School—

Berwyn, Illinois

Post:

The Public Library of Umea and the Vasterbotten County Library in Umea, Sweden

Renowned for its long, dark winters, Sweden is, not surprisingly, a "reading society." Why venture into the Arctic cold when within easy reach is a warm, bright world of ideas? Books are so tightly woven into the fabric of Swedish life that every person in Sweden, no matter how remote his or her locale, has equal access to library services. The goal of Swedish libraries is to provide patrons with guidance in the selection of reading materials and other print sources of information.

Downes arrived in Vasterbotten County on October 2, 1988 with her primary objective to help Swedish children develop a lifelong love of reading and to expose them to spoken American English. (Students begin learning English in Grade 4.) Downes learned that over one half of the libraries in Sweden were combined public/school library facilities. She spent much of her five-month stay visiting schools and libraries throughout Vasterbotten County, stopping by 150 classrooms for 40 minutes each to share her knowledge of American culture and delight in American literature.

While stories about Paul Bunyan would have met with great favor in this timber region, Downes could not find any that had been translated into Swedish. Instead, she succeeded in capturing the children's imaginations with such timeless, magical stories as Ezra Jack Keats' "The Snowy Day" ("a hit because children play the same games in the snow wherever it falls in the world," she observed) and Laura Ingalls Wilder's "Little House on the Prairie," also very popular for having been televised in Sweden, as in the United States.

Along the way, this Library Fellow found plenty of opportunities to talk about life in America. She enchanted listeners with slides of Chicago accompanied by a tape of Frank Sinatra singing "My Kind of Town." Among other topics, she answered questions raised by students about the 1988 presidential election and the workings of the electoral college. Downes even left "a physical trail of America" across Vasterbotten County with a paper "snowstorm" of hundreds of books on American culture, and library posters, pamphlets, and bookmarks—gifts from USIA and ALA. Some libraries laminated the posters for permanent display, so thrilled were they with these gifts. (Ironically, this manufactured snowstorm was one of the few Downes experienced while in Sweden; 1988 was Vasterbotten County's warmest winter in 200 years!)

Left to right: Downes with Swedish colleague Lief Zalle, USIS employee Brian Guss and Jan-Olof Nyman (seated) using the Swedish Parliament Library's database.

Throughout all her travels, Downes never lost sight of the goal of the expansion of library services beyond the provision of reading guidance. Her area of expertise, in fact, is training and administration in library media services. She has instructed U.S. teachers and school librarians in how to sequentially integrate the teaching of library skills throughout all aspects of the Grade K to 12 curriculum.

Downes put her special training to work by conducting workshops at library conferences and library schools which gave her a broader view of Sweden's information landscape. Library service in general, Downes learned, reflects the Swedish Parliament's commitment to cultural equality for all citizens, whereby all people are encouraged to develop their creative talents and are given many opportunities to enjoy cultural experiences. This emphasis results in the creation of a total social environment that integrates library services with the cultural resources. For example, in Umea, the largest city in Vasterbotten County, the new library and the cultural center were planned and built next to each other on the main shopping mall. Staff from the two facilities frequently collaborate in planning programs and conveniently share resources as well.

While in Sweden, she conducted a survey of 23 school library programs in Vasterbotten County. The survey, prepared by the Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education, allowed Downes to gather both qualitative and quantitative data from which recommendations for improving and expanding school library services in Sweden could be developed.

Among her many findings, she discovered that the most important element of a school library program—service—is hampered because librarians are not trained as

teachers. Unlike the United States, where school librarians are hybrid professionals trained both in education and in library science, a librarian who works in a Swedish school is not required to be a teacher, and a teacher who works in a Swedish school library is not required to take library courses. As a result of this situation, although students do learn the basics of how to use the library, such training does not occur sequentially at each grade level, nor is it coordinated with classroom instruction across the curriculum.

School librarians, Downes observed, consider their main function to be that of assisting students and teachers in finding the right book, a role librarians perform in accord with the general Swedish library philosophy of encouraging reading enjoyment. Library holdings consist primarily of print materials (six to ten books per patron), outpacing the numbers of print materials found in U.S. school libraries. Very few Swedish school libraries own nonprint media such as 16mm films, videotapes, slides, or audiocassettes. Instead, teachers borrow these items from an audiovisual center supported by tax dollars and accessible to everyone in the county.

Most classrooms in Vasterbotten County are permanently equipped with audio players, slide projectors, overhead projectors, and screens. Other A-V equipment, including videocassette players, TV monitors, and film projectors, circulate throughout the building. Librarians are not responsible for the school's A-V equipment or the ordering of the nonprint materials. From an American's perspective, this set-up, combined with a shortage of specially trained school library personnel, cuts sharply into the school library's potential effectiveness as an integral part of the education program.

On the plus side, Downes noted that Swedish school libraries and the personnel who manage them are ready to move forward and to begin planning systematically to expand the service component of school library programs. Happily, all of the other components—facilities, budgets, staff, and collection development—are already in place. What's needed now, says Downes, is for each county school board to hire an experienced professional librarian-educator to develop a long-range plan that would (1) integrate school library programs into the curriculum and (2) organize library multi-media centers so that the nonprint collection is readily accessible to both students and teachers.

Writing home about her post at the new Vasterbotten County Library, Downes noted the facility's efforts to make cultural parity a reality with its accessibility, inviting atmosphere, and extensive resources:

The library is open long hours to meet the needs of this reading society. The brightly lit rooms beckon from the mall. Upon entering the building, one immediately passes a cafe and enters an inviting room finished in light wood with floors, chairs, and tables all made out of white pine. Here one can find 77 newspapers and 881 magazines in 20 languages, including Arabic, Tigrinja, and Persian. There are 551,860 books, also in many languages, in the main library collection, which averages out to about 6.2 books per person.

Her visits to 40 other libraries scattered throughout Vasterbotten County, including two in factories and one in a prison, gave a similar impression of Swedish libraries as being cheerful, busy places. Furthermore, the country's extensive interlibrary loan system, Downes learned, expands the capability of every library, regardless of size or location, to provide for the reading needs of its patrons. For example, each library in Vasterbotten has access to the book collection of the main library through interlibrary loan. Very small libraries can access the holdings of larger libraries through microfiche catalogs housed on their premises. In Umea, the smallest schools have microfiche catalogs of every book owned by the other 53 grade schools.

"I felt very much at **HOME** in *Vasterbotten County.* Every house I visited had a wall or TWO filled with **BOOKS.**"

Having achieved considerable success in bringing books and patrons together, Swedish school libraries now are poised to assume a larger role in the education of students, reflected Downes as her February 28 departure date drew near. This Library Fellow can take satisfaction in knowing that her efforts to familiarize librarians with the concepts of integrated library instruction and multi-media centers will bring long-term benefits to the students as the librarians and teachers continue to discuss ways to increase "information power."

NANCY HILL

from

Roanoke, Virginia,

to Sanaa, Yemen

Arab Republic

Librarian

Fishburn Library—

Hollins College,

Virginia

Post:

The Sanaa

University Library

in Sanaa, Yemen

Arab Republic

Tucked away in the extreme southwest corner of the Arabian Peninsula along the Red Sea is one of the region's most fertile lands, the Yemen Arab Republic. It is home mainly to farmers and to sheep and cattle herders. But the country's relative obscurity, at least to Americans, stems less from its out-of-the-way location and very low-profile citizenry (one seldom hears about Yemenis in the Western news media) than from its new name. Centuries ago, Yemen was part of the kingdom of Saba, better known as the biblical Sheba. Americans know this land best through its famous ancient ruler, the much-mythologized Queen of Sheba.

When Nancy Hill left the Blue Ridge of Virginia to begin her Fellowship in the mountains of Yemen, she was not as unfamiliar with this republic as are most Americans. Hill had once lived in neighboring Saudi Arabia for fifteen years and in the West Bank for four years and therefore not only knew of Yemen's existence; she was also aware of the country's urgent need for modern library services.

This Library Fellow had but ten months (from September 1, 1988, to June 30, 1989) to help bring the Central Library at Sanaa University in the nation's capital up to date in its policies and procedures.

She arrived to an undergraduate research library that had no reference services and very few (mostly outdated) reference works, no formal acquisitions policy (staff instead ordered five copies each of whatever books were requested by faculty members), and a circulation system that charged students a $20 annual deposit to borrow only two books each for two weeks.

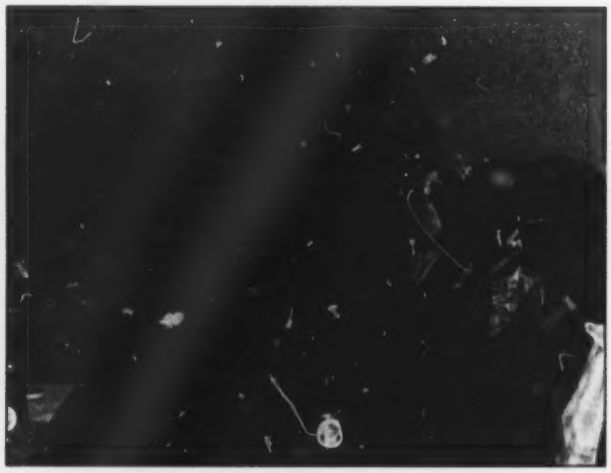
Contributing to these procedural problems were physical ones. As Hill wrote in an early letter home: "I'd forgotten how dusty the Middle East is. Here, nothing is air conditioned, since the temperature is both moderate and stable; this means the windows and doors are always open, giving free rein to the dust." Dust covered tables, shelves, and the books themselves, hastening deterioration and creating an unpleasant environment.

In addition, the library's layout impeded efficiency and led to overcrowding in certain sections. For instance, the card catalog stood cheek by jowl with the circulation desk on the first floor. Catalog users thus had to scrunch together to avoid the inevitable foot traffic near the circulation desk. This inconvenience was mild compared with what patrons had to do to get to the books. The entire book collection was housed on the second floor, causing patrons to run back and forth, and up and down the staircase trying to locate desired titles. Clearly, the library and its systems needed both an actual and a figurative "cleaning up."

So Hill quite literally rolled up her sleeves and got down to the nitty-gritty work of reorganizing the Sanaa University Library. To allocate her time most effectively, she spent one day a week per library department consulting with the department's librarians and clerical staff. In this way, she was able to evaluate thoroughly all of the Central Library's operations. Hill even found time to pitch in and help with some of the physical labor, such as labeling and shelving, both to demonstrate better ways of organizing and managing the collection and to set the wheels in motion for the actual work to get done. She concentrated on "finite projects" rather than on long-term ones because the library's immediate needs loomed large and could be addressed by the largely untrained library staff. Said Hill, what American librarians would consider simple, basic tasks are much more difficult to accomplish in Yemen.

Along with developing a comprehensive narrative list of suggestions for library improvement, Hill wrote what amounts to several brief procedures manuals in such areas as cataloging, acquisitions, shelving, collection development, documents handling (the Sanaa University Library was a United Nations depository), and serials management. She also provided reference services to students and faculty, since no reference librarian had been hired; compiled and recommended a list of 750 standard reference works for acquisition (the library's core reference tools consist of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, and, ironically, Sheehy's *Guide to Reference Books*); and wrote

Hill with Ahmad al-Yadoumi, Deputy to the General Director of Sanaa University Library, and Hill's greatest source of practical and moral support.



The Sanaa University Library staff included men and women from Yemen, Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, India and Lebanon.

job descriptions and procedures manuals for all library administrators and staff (this task included drawing up a proposed organizational chart to give workers a glimpse of "the big picture" and their places in it).

But Hill's work had just begun. By the end of the academic year, she accomplished much. She presented bibliographic instruction to students and faculty and drafted, as a corollary activity, a proposal for producing an educational video on library research methods. (Library instruction is a high priority, since a large percentage of users know absolutely nothing about how to find information, Hill commented.) Her video proposal contained a complete sample script as a further selling point.

In the time remaining, Hill also completed several other projects. She sorted and cataloged the library's collection of documents on Yemen, for which there are frequent patron requests; drafted a report outlining the advantages/disadvantages, expenses, and preparation needs associated with online and CD-ROM information systems; and wrote a report evaluating the educational and training needs of the Central Library's technical and professional staffs.

Allied with the goal of improving library operations, Hill was charged with the task of promoting the image of the Central Library within the university community. This aspect of her mission cut to the very core of what was needed most in the Sanaa University Library and is the hallmark of every well-functioning library system: an ethic of public service.

Hill thus began laying the groundwork for a program of public service at the Central Library in order to change the public's perception of the library and librarians. Together with the library's assistant director, she proposed developing an informational brochure about the library, to be published when funds and equipment (the library has no working photocopier) become available. She also encouraged establishing a library association among local librarians, to hasten library development through cooperation. This association was successfully launched at a November 1988 meeting of Yemeni librarians—the first such gathering ever—at the Sanaa University Library.

But the best public relations, Hill realized, is to develop the library's collection and services. She stated, "If you give good service, you will gradually win support for the library among the university community." And certainly she did by cultivating a commitment to service among many of the librarians she worked with.

While the Sanaa University Library, like libraries throughout Yemen, remains in an early stage of development, Hill is optimistic that the progress made this past year will continue apace. She quipped, "The Queen of Sheba has come and gone from here, the Ottoman Empire rose and fell, and no doubt the country will survive the growing pains of a library." No doubt indeed.

"Here I am, an ordinary **AMERICAN** librarian, and I'm in Yemen, and **most** Americans don't even know where *YEMEN* is!"

RAGAI MAKAR

from
Salt Lake City, Utah, to
Cairo, Egypt
Head, Middle East Library
University of Utah
Post:
The Egyptian Society for the Dissemination of University Culture and Knowledge in Cairo, Egypt

To the American mind, Cairo, Egypt, conjures up images of pyramids, the sphinx, and the ruins at Memphis—all popular tourist attractions. To an Egyptian, however, Cairo is more notable as the intellectual center of the Islamic world. So it was only natural that an international project involving books in Arabic translation should take place here. And even more natural that the project be spearheaded by a transplanted—to America—native Egyptian.

Ragai Makar returned to his homeland, which lies serenely on the Mediterranean coast of northeast Africa, on September 1, 1988, for an all-too-short sojourn of six months (until February 28, 1989). During that time, he compiled a list in both English and Arabic of books translated from English into Arabic in all of the Arab countries. The aim of this admittedly complex project was not to develop an all-inclusive list, which would have been impossible, but instead to create the nucleus for an ongoing project.

Makar's background and experience fully meet the requirements for this assignment. Arabic is his native tongue; he is a professional translator and interpreter as well as a librarian; he is head of an outstanding Middle East library collection in the United States; and he has special training and work experience in sociology and social work, which, together with his deep familiarity with the Arab culture, gives him a rare insight into the social dynamics of Middle Eastern countries.

To compile his bibliography, Makar traveled throughout the Arab world, meeting with publishers, librarians, and other information specialists in a diversity of nations, among them Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, and Qatar. His efforts resulted in a list of approximately 2,000 titles translated into Arabic and published in the Arab world from 1950 to 1987, focusing particularly on books still in print with Arab publishers. It is divided into 48 subject areas, with books arranged alphabetically by subject and by the American authors' names. The listing for each title includes publishing information about both the original English edition and the Arabic translation, along with information about how the book can be obtained and/or where it can be examined.

Excluded from the list are books translated by the U.S. Information Agency's Book Program, which issues its own lists; 800 Arabic titles for which the identities of the original English editions could not be found; and books translated into Arabic under variant titles chosen by the translators (e.g., scores of books based on films made by Walt Disney and Alfred Hitchcock as well as books in popular psychology and Christian religious literature). Despite these omissions, the bibliography still was unwieldy and had to be condensed in order for the Egyptian Society for the Dissemination of University Culture and Knowledge (ESDUCK), the publisher and copyright holder as well as Makar's host institution, to be financially and physically able to reproduce it for distribution. The final list appears in both English and Arabic.

It took Makar six months of hard and often tedious "detective work" to carry out the main goal of his Fellowship. He checked a variety of resources and reference materials including: hundreds of trade lists produced by Arab publishers, Arab national bibliographies, and dozens of other bibliographies, such as *Egyptian Books in Print* (published in Cairo) and *Arab Books in Print* (published in Tunis by ALESCO, the Arab UNESCO). This Fellow also consulted a multitude of publishers, librarians in national and university libraries, and officials in organizations and government departments in charge of publishing and translation programs throughout the Arab world (e.g., the Ministries of Culture and Higher Education in Baghdad; the Egyptian General Organization for the Book; the National Councils of the Arts, Letters, and Sciences in Kuwait and Cairo; and the Academy of the Arabic Language in Amman, Jordan).

These labors led to some interesting side excursions and related activities. Arab newspapers, weekly

Baghdad "Dar al-Salam–City of Peace."

Dr. Mustafa al-Hajjar, President of the Association of Arab Historians (l), with his assistant.

magazines, broadcast services, and television stations interviewed Makar on a wide range of topics: library and information services in the United States, Arabic and Islamic studies and libraries in American universities, and Middle East studies programs in the United States.

In addition, Makar conducted a two-week workshop in Doha, Qatar, for the librarians at the Ministry of Education and for those at Qatar's National Library. The topics for these 12 sessions (each lasting three hours and given in Arabic) included the role of libraries in contemporary society, library information sources across the media, collection development, reference and bibliographic services, and the role and influence of the electronic library.

Closely related to his travels to publishing centers, this Fellow attended two major publishing events: the 14th Arabic Book Fair in Kuwait and the Cairo 21st International Book Fair. At the Kuwait Book Fair, which drew a majority of Arab publishers, Makar learned that government activities in publishing and translation are increasing in all of the Arab countries. The Kuwait government in particular, said Makar, had begun a model publishing program that will "help fill in the gaps in private publishing activities." This program stems from a broad-based effort begun in 1956 by the Department of Publication (now the Ministry of Culture and Education) to "assist any Kuwaiti author in publishing his book, free, in its [the Department's] modern printing house on condition that the book is of literary or scientific value."

The Cairo Book Fair was by far the more impressive of the two. A leading cultural event, the fair occupied six large buildings, displayed literally millions of items, and attracted large segments of the public and the business community. In fact, noted Makar, visitors from all the Arab countries travel to the fair each year to see the vast array of books offered by Egypt and 52 other countries. Said Makar:

The Cairo Fair has, for a long time, served to foster the consolidation of international cultural and trade relations. It is not only a place for the preparation and conclusion of agreements on reciprocal book trade, but it is also a place for the exchange of technological and cultural experience, and for coordinating the production of books in the Arab world.

In his own small way, Book Fellow Ragai Makar has played a similar role in fostering the exchange of ideas. His efforts have helped advance the goal of making knowledge more widely available in book form in Egypt and in other parts of the Arab world. For without the beginnings of a comprehensive list of books in translation, readers in one part of the Arab world would remain limited in their knowledge of what American-published books exist in translation in another part of the Arabic-speaking world. Moreover, through the creation of this list, this Fellow has opened up "a window of opportunity" to intercultural understanding and cooperation.

"I have *enjoyed* working for the [Library/Book Fellows] PROGRAM. . . . [It] proved to be extremely useful to all parties **participating** in it."

RUTH A. PAGELL

from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Bangkok, Thailand

Associate Director Lippincott Library of the Wharton School Post: The Asian Institute of Technology Library and Regional Documentation Center in Bangkok, Thailand

In Thailand, one can find the simple and the sophisticated existing side by side in an unusual cacophony of sounds and sights: the awesome Khmer ruins; pungent exotic fruits (mangos, durians, rambutans) beckoning from street stalls; national parks home to teeming gibbons, elephants and other wildlife; the warm, sparkling, winding Mekong River; Bangkok traffic that "makes New York City streets look like country lanes"; picturesque Buddhist temples; and sticky tropical heat lingering until October, occasionally giving way unpredictably to the drumming of monsoon rains. Almost as changeable as the scenery was ALA Library Fellow Ruth Pagell's assignment in Bangkok.

Pagell had arrived at her host institution expecting to devote much of her year-long tour to helping the faculty design a postgraduate curriculum in information management. This stated objective, she was to discover, however, no longer suited that institution's evolving needs.

The Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) is an internationally funded graduate school located on the outskirts of Bangkok. Its faculty come from more than 30 countries, and its students are from Southeast Asia and the Subcontinent (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal). The Institute's Library and Regional Documentation Center (LRDC) was well into its fourth year of offering a popular three-month training program, "New Information Technology and Computerized Library Services," when Pagell arrived in November of 1988. This hands-on training program represents the LRDC's main effort at providing professional education.

The course is designed primarily for individuals who maintain small documentation centers. Its goals are "to provide an understanding of the principles of library and information services, and [to] give librarians, documentalists, and subject specialists an opportunity to update their knowledge of rapidly changing information technologies." In the process, the administrator at the LRDC had expressed an interest in expanding the program into a full postgraduate curriculum. But plans to do so never materialized, unbeknownst to Pagell. Thus she abruptly had to adjust her sights to a whole new objective.

Before she left Bangkok, however, Pagell did have the opportunity to evaluate and report on the need for a postgraduate information science curriculum at AIT. Her findings led her to conclude that the design of such a curriculum is "premature," since the LRDC's energies and limited resources would be better spent providing greatly needed hands-on training in computerized library services. She therefore recommended that the LRDC continue its three-month course, with three goals in mind: [1] improving the professional level of the course; [2] introducing new, short courses focusing on specific computer applications; and [3] making organizational changes that would enhance the Center's operations.

Although the Asian Institute of Technology is very modern and computerized, it is still grappling with library automation issues, said Pagell. She discovered that change in the Institute's library has been slow in recent years. Once at the forefront of Asian academic libraries, the AIT Library now is at risk of being "outclassed" by libraries whose countries send students to the Institute's LRDC to learn new information management techniques and methodologies.

In light of these observations, Pagell restructured her assignment to fit

Pagell presents gift materials to the Asian Institute of Technology Library.

the Institute's new priorities—a not uncommon situation for Fellows. Pagell's assignment took on three phases: (1) conducting a systems analysis of the Library and Regional Documentation Center's technical processing units in order to suggest improvements, (2) holding workshops and seminars for library staff, graduate students and trainees on library management, with an emphasis on electronic technologies and automation, and (3) teaching several specialized computer courses as part of the LRDC's three-month training program.

The first and second phases of her project fortuitously shared a common goal: making the new information management technologies an integral part of the Institute's operations. AIT hoped to become a pioneer for the region by installing an integrated online system. Such a system would improve the LRDC's public image, and it would respond better to the needs of users and staff, resulting in greater efficiency overall.

Before a full-scale online system could be put into place, however, Pagell needed to document where procedural inefficiencies existed with the present ISIS-versed system. Acquisitions provided an obvious example with its backlog of volumes to be processed (the

LRDC receives 600 volumes monthly; a scant 20 percent of these are acquired through paid orders). This backlog is due in part, she learned, to the LRDC's reliance on labor-intensive processing methods. For instance, of the 6,568 volumes cataloged in 1987, 76 percent received original cataloging. Other procedures, such as recordkeeping, needed to be modified as well to meet changing needs and to be in tune with the LRDC's goal of having a fully automated environment. She proposed these and other procedural changes in a written report to the Center's administrators.

Pagell then turned her attention to providing in-service training and instruction at the LRDC. Pagell enthusiastically faced this challenge, concentrating her efforts on teaching microcomputer applications and CD-ROM information retrieval. The response from library staff was equally enthusiastic. To ensure that these efforts are continued, Pagell submitted a proposal to the LRDC administration for ongoing staff training and follow-up activities.

At AIT, she also prepared a database of library articles, introduced subject bibliographies to the reference department (which have subsequently been continued), taught students and faculty information-retrieval techniques, helped staff with statistical projects, and assisted in the development of plans to market the library's services. As part of her planned project goals, Pagell taught students from 14 countries who were attending the Institute's three-month training program. Her three sessions covered LOTUS, CD-ROM, and Marketing Theory, among other topics.

Pagell had the good fortune to expand her work beyond AIT, since interest in information technologies is widespread throughout the Thai library community. She viewed this show of interest as a positive sign that the country is preparing to meet the demands of the Information Age. Yet Thailand remains in varying stages of readiness. On the one hand, for instance, academic institutions are installing databases, while on the other, the country has no national union catalog (each institution must do its own cataloging). And the innovative activities of each region are quite varied: one institution's innovative project involves having a motorcycle bring books and storytelling to children, while another uses an IBM optical disk to search a sacred Buddhist text.

Pagell found her interactions with all sectors of the Thai library community both stimulating and productive. She had an ongoing relationship with the AUA library, the USIS sponsored library in Bangkok where she provided training and helped with information sharing conferences in return for professional support and friendship. At the Thomassat University Library's International Conference on Bibliographic Control, she presented a paper, chaired a session, and served on the Technical Committee. At Chulalongkorn University, Pagell lectured to advanced students and staff on "Strategic Planning for New Technological Innovations" and "Marketing Library Services." She offered library staff and library science faculty at Chiang Mai University in-service training on computer searching techniques. At Ramkamhaeng University, she lectured on new information technologies and library automation.

Pagell also occasionally found herself in the role of consultant. She advised the Jesuit Refugee Relief Organization on ways to set up a small information center. She consulted with the School of Management Information Center to help establish a documentation center for management information in conjunction with AIT's new MBA program, "Management of Technology." She met with the reference and systems librarian at the Ramkamhaeng University Library to develop projects to upgrade service. And she consulted with the National Institute for Development Administration on the creation of an MLS curriculum as well as on other library issues.

Amid all this activity, Pagell found time to visit Nepal, where she lectured in Kathmandu on "New Information Technologies in Science and Technology" to the Royal Academy of Science and Technology. She also presented a paper and gave a CD-ROM workshop at the International Online Meeting in London.

Reflecting on her experiences this past year, Pagell wrote:

My year in Thailand has been rewarding for me and, I hope, for members of the Thai and Asian library community. I have shared ideas with them and tried to raise their awareness of information technologies [and] their interest in keeping up with these changes not only in the literature but by introducing them into their institutions.

"This has been a year like **no other** year for me. . . . I hope that I have been ***able*** to give as much as I *HAVE* received and that I can continue to use what I have learned."

DONNA TAXCO TANG

from

Tucson, Arizona,

to Buenos Aires,

Argentina

Director

Pima Community

College Library

Post: the National

Protective

Commission for

People's Libraries

and the National

University Library

School in Buenos

Aires, Argentina

Library Fellow Donna Taxco Tang embarked on her overseas assignment during an exciting time of change in Argentina: a new President was about to be elected, the heads of almost every government department were on their way out, and the people were clamoring for reforms in a dismal period of hyperinflation (the first six months of 1989 saw inflation rise 2,100%, dropping to 200% by July) and economic upheaval. So while the climate in Tang's base of operations, Buenos Aires, was temperate, the country's social, economic, and political climate was anything but that.

This break with the past bode well for Argentina's library system, however. Said Tang, "[I]t is a moment of great opportunity for public libraries politically and socially, because the need and desire for libraries has become really evident, and the Peronists—as the 'populist' party—have an ideological commitment to satisfying the needs of the people."

Prior to this "changing of the guard," the country had become entrenched in an elitist tradition that viewed libraries as sacrosanct cultural institutions in a class with symphony orchestras, opera and dance companies, and art museums. As such, libraries were somewhat untouchable as well as out of touch with the "popular culture." A large part of Tang's mission, then, was to introduce the Argentines to the concept of libraries as dynamic entities serving and responding to the needs of people from *every* social and economic strata—not just the elite. She would thus help pave the way for the idea of free access to information for all citizens to be translated into policy and action.

But before turning her full attention to this important work, Tang devoted her first month (March 1989) in-country to advising the Ministry of Education on the possibility of developing a community college system in Argentina. The Ministry, impressed with Tang's solid background as an administrator at an Arizona community college, sought this Fellow out particularly to learn about how American community colleges work. Argentine leaders and educators, she discovered, are being forced to look to higher education alternatives because the existing university system is critically overcrowded.

In her role as an educational consultant, Tang participated in a three-day seminar exploring the characteristics of the American community college system and ways to implement such a system throughout Argentina. The seminar was held in Buenos Aires and was well attended by one hundred academic administrators, educators, government policy-makers, and higher-education specialists from the national universities, private learning institutions, and various government branches.

Many of the ideas proposed at the seminar by committees of specialists, which included the Cuban-born presidents of two U.S. community colleges, were nothing short of revolutionary to Argentine educators. Foremost among the ground-breaking concepts were these: the community college's central and direct role in the community; its flexible curriculum; its emphasis on accessibility to *all* sectors of the community, even marginal populations; its ability to respond rapidly to the needs of the community, especially to businesses; its ability to provide lifelong learning; its provision of developmental and cooperative education and student counseling; and its diversity of faculty and students. By contrast, the Argentine educational system is rigid, elitist, and conservative, said Tang.

Discussions undertaken during this first month presaged conversations Tang was to have in the subsequent months of her stay, concerning the role of public libraries. That is, a consistent thematic current runs through Argentina's approach both to its higher-education system and to its libraries. Both sets of institutions, Tang found, do not adequately address the people's needs. This discovery was all the more unsettling because "at the turn of the century, Argentina was one of the richest, most developed nations in the world," commented Tang. "Even as late as the 1950's," she continued, "the collections of the university libraries were by far the largest and best organized in South America. Not only has no progress been made since then, but the situation has worsened." Yet amazingly, and paradoxically, Argentina is considered to have a better educational system and higher literacy rate (93%) than most Latin American countries.

Tang set out to tackle the problem

Ana Dolora de Lesta (l), Director of the Popular Library in General Roca, R.N., Argentina and Donna Tang Taxco (r).

on a variety of fronts, but necessity demanded that the main thrust of her efforts be geared toward fact finding to assess the library situation in Argentina and toward acquainting Argentines with the philosophy and purpose behind public libraries in other countries. In this way, she could begin to fulfill her project's ultimate goal: assisting the development of public libraries in Argentina.

She began with a round of visits to dozens of libraries in Buenos Aires, the nation's capital. These ran the gamut from architecturally spectacular monuments, such as the centuries-old library at the National College Preparatory School in Buenos Aires, which "look[s] like an engraving of Oxford or Cambridge" and even has secret tunnels burrowed beneath the structure for wartime escapes and smuggling contraband, to smaller, purely functional facilities, such as the library of the National Savings Bank, which is open to the public, and the library of the Insurance Workers' Union, among others.

On the positive side, Tang learned that the Argentines have a sophisticated appreciation for libraries and a "voracious appetite for books." Unfortunately, isolationism characterizes many of the libraries. When money was plentiful, she explained, libraries sprouted even in the country's tiniest recesses. Their habit of autonomy continues, said Tang, resulting in many libraries reinventing the wheel despite "miserably scarce" funds and resources. Moreover, Argentina has no national bibliography and no real plans for one.

Fragmentation and stagnation are "endemic," noted Tang: "The system has not responded to the changes of the last 30 years. It hasn't even been able to keep collections current or to educate and train librarians who could respond to change."

This paucity stands in stark contrast to the country's riches—Buenos Aires' "grand, exuberant 19th-century architecture and beautiful parks filled with trees and monumental sculpture"; its "phenomenally good" yet inexpensive food; fresh-cut flowers adorning nearly every surface; clothing, jewelry, furs, antiques, *objets d'art* that rival those of Paris; and theater, music, movies, and stimulating conversation—"all [are] in great supply."

Tang's many visits, meetings, and discussions both in the capital and throughout the provinces produced some practical suggestions and recommendations for improving library services, which she detailed in several written reports. Her other efforts—too numerous to mention in full—included teaching public library philosophy at the National University of Buenos Aires and at the Washington-Artigas Library (USIS) in Montevideo, Uruguay (under the auspices of the Library School of the University of the Republic of Uruguay); assisting in the formation of a network of people's libraries in the "wilds of Patagonia," a cold plateau region in the south, where she visited 30 libraries; and helping the National Commission construct a four-part community survey to solicit information from existing public libraries and from all of Argentina's mayors in order to "take inventory" of the national people's library scene and to be used as a basis for plotting the course of the country's public libraries.

This Fellow also put her experience as a library planner to good use. She gave planning/architectural advice to libraries scattered throughout the provinces of Patagonia and consulted on the design of the National Library, which has been under construction for 30 years. (In a symbolic gesture signifying the new ruling party's commitment to a brighter future for Argentina, the new library director has made the completion of the national library a top priority.)

But Tang considers as perhaps her most important contribution the bringing of a new perspective on public libraries to the Argentines. Everywhere she went, both privately and in large public forums, Tang discussed with teachers, library trustees, university professors, mayors, sociologists, the news media, architects, businesspeople, neighborhood activists, cultural directors, and librarians the crucial role that public libraries play in the economic, social, and political development of a country. This "call for a revolution in Argentine library thinking," she says, is essential for the country's libraries to move into the egalitarian information age, where libraries are viewed not as a privilege but as a fundamental right and a public good.

Hope for the country as a whole lies in large measure with its libraries and dedicated library workers. And their optimism fortunately runs high. Notes Tang:

Argentine public librarians are astonishing and inspiring in their commitment to serve their communities in spite of crushing uncertainties and deficiencies. There is an overwhelming desire to do things right. What is important is that they have the opportunity to find out what are the right things to do, and they are hungry for any information and insight and encouragement the rest of us can give them.

Tang's determined efforts to share her knowledge and expertise with the Argentines these past seven months (March 1, 1989 to September 30, 1989) have helped build a bridge to the rest of the library world. From any point of view, that is no small success and augurs well for the future of library services in this struggling democratic republic.

"This has been an ***extremely*** interesting and beautiful **experience**, from every possible point of view."

JANE L. HAMMOND

from

Ithaca, New York,

to

Monrovia, Liberia

Law Librarian and

Professor of Law

Cornell Law

Library

Cornell University

Post:

The National Law

Library in

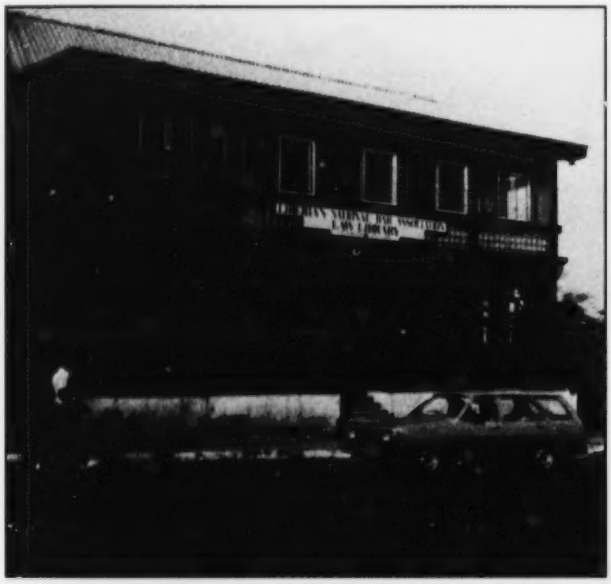
Monrovia, Liberia

Library Fellow Jane L. Hammond did better than "make do" during her overseas assignment this past year in Monrovia, Liberia, the capital of Africa's oldest black republic. In just three months—January 1, 1989, to March 31, 1989—she accomplished the several project goals entrusted to her, each of which taken alone could easily have consumed her allotted time.

Her Fellowship project arose, said Hammond, from the need for a generally accessible law library in Liberia. Because Monrovia has the country's highest concentration of practicing attorneys, that city was chosen as the site of the new library, the first law library in Liberia not to be housed in a government office or to come under the auspices of a university. The project fell solidly within Hammond's field of expertise (law librarianship and legal education in the United States), and it was made easier because she had the total support of her hosts.

Hammond arrived in this tropical land to "the best weather that Monrovia offers—the dry season." Her enthusiasm reinforced by all-around favorable conditions, she took immediately to the task of helping the Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA) organize the National Law Library and train Liberian staff in the administration of the new facility. Hammond was especially fortunate to be able to draw from her earlier experience back home in helping guide the development of a new law school library. In that project, she had to create the library's collection, its technical processing services, and its public services policies/procedures, In many ways, a similar project as she was successfully to do again in Liberia.

By way of background, Hammond learned that in 1987 the U.S. Ambassador to Liberia had granted the project $60,000 from the U.S. Human Rights Fund, whereupon the Liberian government gave the LNBA permission to use the former Executive Mansion in central Monrovia for its National Law Library. This historic two-story building underwent a major renovation just prior to Hammond's arrival, to comfortably accommodate the law library on the top floor (a public library aimed at children was already housed on the first floor). The refurbished law library now contains a reading room with bookcases for more than 2,000 volumes, a stack area that can house at least 4,000 volumes, and a large, pleasant enclosed porch filled with tables and chairs.



This building in central Monrovia, now home of the National Law Library, was the first Executive Mansion of Liberia.

More than $20,000 of the Human Rights Fund went toward the purchase of a core collection of brand-new, current American legal materials. A U.S. dealer in secondhand law books also contributed hundreds of cartons of books to the collection. In all, 750 cartons of books and other legal materials waited to be unpacked and sorted, 300 cartons of which Hammond spent most of her first month sifting through. The sale of duplicate sets of these books brought in an additional $10,000, which was used to purchase a librarian's desk and chair and an air-conditioner/dehumidifier to combat mold. It will also fund staff salaries for one year. Timed with her arrival, the bar association hired two library staff: a native librarian with a two-year certificate in librarianship and experience in cataloging and circulation, and a general support person to do physical labor, such as shelving, and to serve as a security guard and messenger (the library has no telephone, and the mail service is unreliable).

A major component of Hammond's assignment was to train the Liberian staff to maintain the library after she left. Toward this end, she held twice-weekly classes tailor-made to address the use of materials specific to the National Law Library's collection, a large portion of which is composed of court reports. Much of the training program Hammond devised had to be "ad hoc" when her lecture notes, sample exercises, law librarianship texts, and legal bibliography materials were lost in transit to Liberia—just one example of "making do" under sometimes trying circumstances.

Another aspect of Hammond's work consisted of cataloging and classifying the library's collection.

Less than ten percent of the collection had CIP copy printed in it, and an OCLC account was not feasible. Therefore, she was left to do original cataloging in long-hand until a manual typewriter and a volunteer assistant arrived to ease this onerous task. All together, 560 titles were cataloged, 230 subject headings were established for a subject authority file containing cross references and scope notes, and 4,300 volumes were processed for the permanent collection. The master cards were typed in final form, and all that remained was for the card sets to be typed by the library's permanent staff.

Additionally, Hammond developed and wrote an operational manual to guide law library staff members, and she also drew up a list of recommendations for future use in collection development. By the time of her departure in late March, the National Law Library was ready to open its doors to the general public. A formal opening ceremony brought extensive media coverage over the Easter weekend plus a windfall of bookcases loaded with legal volumes that had been donated several years earlier to the past president of the LNBA for the establishment of a bar association library. (He had been reminded of his cache of law books by the publicity surrounding the library opening.)

As if these activities weren't enough, Hammond also found time to consult on collection development with the University of Liberia's law librarian and lecture on American legal publishing and legal encyclopedias to each of two sections of the law school's legal research and writing course. She also purchased for the Cornell University Law School, which has had an abiding relationship with the Liberian legal community since 1952, one copy of all of the obtainable Liberian law books and related materials for interlibrary loan throughout the United States. (These items include a complete photocopied set of the decisions of Liberia's native courts—marking the first time ever that these decisions will be available outside the court offices.)

USIA perhaps best summed up this Library Fellow's contribution in its evaluation of her work overseas:

During the first three months of 1989, Cornell Law Librarian Jane Hammond almost single-handedly set up the Liberian National Law Library and trained the facility's permanent staff. With the use of Human Rights Projects Funds, the historic building housing the library had been renovated and stocked with 750 boxes of law books, but it was USIA Library Fellow Hammond who breathed life into the facility. Working patiently and tactfully with the National Bar Association, she succeeded in completing an intra-mission human rights project aimed at strengthening the rule of law in Liberia by creating a law library accessible to the entire legal community here. . . . But the real measure of Professor Hammond's success was the warm send-off she received at farewell cocktail parties at the library and at the home of the bar association president. The Liberian bar clearly considered her a model Library Fellow.

"'*Making do*' is a vital part of success in *Africa*, and, I believe, we 'made do' **very well.**"

At the formal opening of the Library, Hammond presented the annotated edition of the U.S. Constitution to the President of the Liberian National Bar Association James G. Bull (center) and the Chairman of the Library Committee Eugene Cooper, Deputy Minister of Justice for Codification.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, tribute should be made to the adaptable, adventurous, and resilient individuals profiled in this report. Their creativity and enthusiasm enabled them to succeed in a new environment and make invaluable contributions to international librarianship. They expanded their own horizons and narrowed the gaps in our global village.

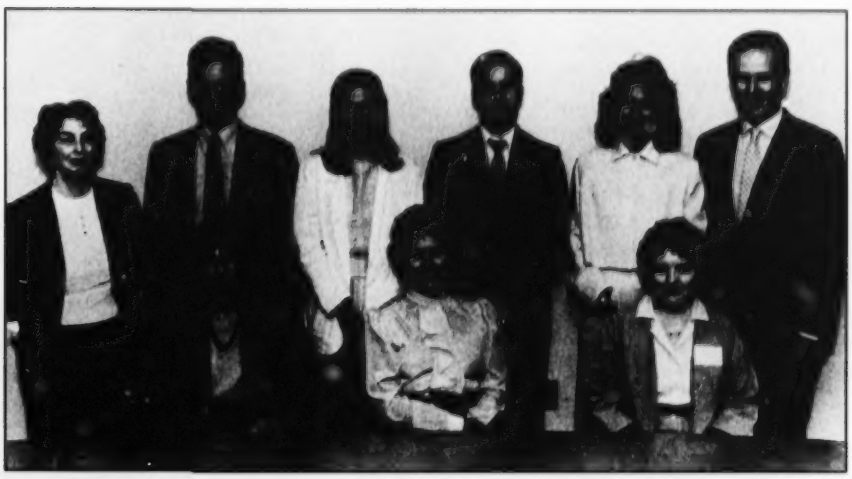
Secondly, the Fellows' U.S. institutions frequently granted leaves of absences and provided assistance which enabled participation in this program. In particular, The Library of Congress should be recongized. Henriette Avram, Associate Librarian for Collections Services, has been supportive of this program from its inception and demonstrated that support particularly with respect to the American Library in Paris project, staffed by Randall K. Barry. Sally McCallum, Chief Network Development and MARC Standards Office and Barry's immediate supervisor, was most directly affected since she not only "lost" Barry for one year, but also provided in valuable assistance to Barry during the project.

Third, the host institutions opened not only their workplaces, but also their homes and hearts to the Fellows. To name just a few, the following individuals provided outstanding support to the Fellows: Dr. Syed Ameer Haider Abidi, Director, East African School of Librarianship, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda; Dr. Amin El-Gamal, President, Egyptian Society for the Dissemination of University Culture and Knowledge, Cairo, Egypt; Mohammad al-Sanabani, Library Director, Sanaa University, Yemen Arab Republic; Steve S. Mwiyeriwa, General Director of the University Library, University of Malawi, Zomba; Robert Grattan, Director, American Library in Paris, France; Elsi Ekstedt, Head Librarian, County Library of Vasterbottem, Sweden; Juan Carlos Secondi, President, National Protective Commission for People's Libraries, Buenos Aires, Argentina; H. Arthur Vespry, Director, Asian Institue of Technology, Library and Regional Documentation Center, Bangkok, Thailand; and Counselor James Bull, President, Liberian National Bar Association, Monrovia.

Special appreciation also goes to the United States Information Service employees stationed around the globe at U.S. Embassies and in Washington, D.C. Helen Amabile, Deputy Chief, USIA Library Programs and Janet M. Gilligan, Regional Library Officer for Northern Europe, deserve special thanks for all their facilitative assistance, and their unfailing support in advancing this program.

Finally, in preparing this final report, three individuals should be thanked for their superb editorial assistance—Mary Banas, Patricia Scarry and Helen Amabile. Natalie Wargin used her remarkable creative skills to design this handsome report showcasing the Fellows' experiences. These individuals made this report possible.

The dedicated assistance of all these people and many more unnamed made these projects successful. While it is difficult to judge the overall effectiveness or lasting significance of these projects, I hope this report provides an honest and lively profile of each Fellows' experience. I know these experiences have enriched and broadened the Fellows. I also hope the experiences have helped to increase international understanding.



The 1988-89 Library Fellows attending an orientation session in Washington, D.C., before departing for their overseas assignments. They are (sitting, l to r): Ruth A. Pagell; Valerie Downes and Nancy Hill. Standing in the second row (l to r): Jane L. Hammond; Richard Fitz, former chief, USIA Library Programs Division; Catherine Collins; Randall Barry; Donna Taxco Tang and Robert P. Doyle, American Library Association. Absent Ragai Makar and Ione Auston.

Robert P. Doyle
American Library Association

ABOUT USIA AND ALA

The United States Information Agency, an independent agency within the executive branch, is responsible for the U.S. government's overseas cultural and information programs, including the Voice of America, the WORLDNET satellite television system, and the Fulbright scholarship program. The U.S. Information Agency maintains or supports 159 libraries and reading rooms in eighty-eight countries and also provides substantial support for library programs in bi-national centers in seventeen countries.

The American Library Association is a private, nongovernmental, educational organization. Founded in 1876, it is the oldest and largest library association in the world, with more than 50,000 members representing all types of libraries. The association is the chief advocate for the people of the United States to achieve and maintain high-quality library and information services—whether by protecting the right to read, educating librarians, improving library services, or making information accessible to everyone.

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